



# Division of Research and Sponsored Programs

## Office of Grantsmanship and Compliance

## Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

# Safety Workplace Policy

Adopted: November 11, 2021

### TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

Division of Research and Sponsored Programs  
Animal Care and Use Guidelines

## Safety Workplace Policy Involving Animal Use

In order to ensure humane treatment and care, all animals used in research, teaching, testing and demonstration must be covered by an approved Tuskegee University Animal Care and Use Committee (TUIACUC) protocol. Thus, all procedures conducted on these animals should be performed by properly trained personnel. By using safe work practices and appropriate personal protection equipment, workers can minimize the likelihood of being bitten, scratched, and/or otherwise exposed to animal body fluids and tissues. TUIACUC has the authority to inspect research laboratory for compliance and recommend sanctions for violations to the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs for enforcement. The Environmental Safety Officer has the responsibility to inspect research facilities on campus for safety and make recommendations to the provost for corrective actions.

Employers should ensure that workers are trained to adhere to the following good practices to prevent exposure to zoonotic diseases when working with animals used in research, teaching, testing and demonstration:

- Proper and appropriate restraint is to be in place when handling animals for control and safety.
- A void use of sharps whenever possible.
- Take extreme care when using a needle and syringe to inject research animals or when using sharps during necropsy procedures.
- Never remove, recap, bend, break, or clip used needles from disposable syringes. Use safety engineered needles when practical.
- Take extra precautions when handling hoofed animals. Due to the physical hazards of weight and strength of the animal, large hoofed mammals pose additional concerns for workers, the larger species of these mammals may resist handling and may require multiple workers to administer medication or perform other functions. Additionally, steel toed shoes should be worn when working the larger (horses and cattle) in confined areas such as stalls. A heavy/durable work boot/shoe should be worn to protect feet.
- Hands must be kept away from the mouth, nose and eyes of the animal unless it is part of the approved SOP procedure, in which case appropriate gloves ( exam, surgical, work) are to be worn during the procedure.
- Wear appropriate PPE (i.e., gloves, gowns, face protection, etc.) in all areas within the various animal facilities.
- A safety specialist may recommend additional precautions (i.e. individually fitted respirators or neoprene gloves) based upon a risk assessment of the work performed.
- Wear tear-resistant gloves to prevent exposure by animal bites. Micro-tears in the gloves may compromise the protection they offer.
- Remove gloves and wash hands after handling animals or tissues derived from them and before leaving the areas where animals are kept.
- Never use your mouth to pipette liquids; use only mechanical pipetting devices.
- Never eat, drink, smoke, handle contact lenses, apply cosmetics, or take or apply medicine in areas where any of these animals are kept.
- Perform procedures carefully to reduce the possibility of creating splashes or aerosols.
- Contain operations that generate hazardous aerosols in properly certified BSCs or other properly ventilated enclosures, such as animal bedding dump stations.
- Wear eye protection. This will not only protect your eyes from potential scratches, but also will protect them from direct contamination from animal secretion or indirect contamination from materials contaminated with animal secretions.
- Wear head/facial hair covering to protect against sprays or splashes of potentially infectious fluids.
- Keep doors closed and appropriately secured to rooms where research animals are kept.
- Clean all spills immediately. Also, be mindful that some spills will require special spill kits.
- Report all incidents and equipment malfunctions to the supervisor.
- Promptly decontaminate work surfaces when procedures are completed and after surfaces are soiled by spills of animal material or waste.
- Properly dispose of animal waste and bedding.
- Workers should report all work-related injuries and illnesses to their supervisor immediately.
- Following a bite by an animal or other injury in which the wound may be contaminated, first aid (in such cases thorough cleansing/disinfection) should be initiated at the work site.
- Contaminated skin and wounds should be washed thoroughly with soap and water for 15 minutes (see previous statement above).
- Contaminated eyes and mucous membranes should be irrigated for 15 minutes using normal saline or water. Appropriate eye wash stations should be available in laboratory settings, but eye wash bottles can be carried and used in more isolated situations such as pastures.
- Consult an occupational health physician concerning wound care standard operating procedures (SOPs) for particular animal bites/scratches. For more information see OSHA' s publication, Laboratory Safety-Working with Small Animals.

**PENAL TY:** **VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE ABOVE ITEMS WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:**  
First Violation: Oral warning, immediate correction of the violation, and documentation of the violation and corrective action.  
Second Violation: Written reprimand and immediate correction of the violation.  
Third Violation: Suspension of laboratory research activities for 30 days and report submitted to Tuskegee University's Misconduct Committee.

**\*\*In case of Emergency contact:** Wilbert Anderson, University Safety Officer at 334-552-1299

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